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MEETING OF EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGISTS AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY

ON April 4 and 5 a number of directors of psychological laboratories and others immediately interested in experimental psychology met on the invitation of Professor Titchener at Cornell University, and in very informal sessions discussed a number of reports of experimental investigations. No formal organization with officers and constitution was undertaken, but the invitation of Professor Münsterberg to hold a similar meeting next year at the Harvard Laboratory was accepted, and it is expected that such meetings will be held regularly at the various psychological laboratories. The following papers were presented:

Experiments on Idiots: Professor E. C. SANFORD.

This was a report of tests of memory, attention, motor ability and discrimination as exhibited by a number of backward children. The difficulty of defining mental deficiency by any simple test was emphasized by the result that in certain respects children distinctly deficient showed very good standing in the elementary tests.

The Laboratory Investigation of Backward Children: Professor L. WITMER.

A report in detail of three cases which had been treated by a system of will-training, after examination at the Pennsylvania Laboratory. The report emphasized the value of such work as a means of collecting psychological facts.

Analysis of Movements made in Simple and Complex Reactions: Professor C. H. JUDD.

A report of results obtained at the Yale Laboratory by recording in full the movements made by the hand of a reactor during reaction experiments. The movement was shown to be in many cases very complex, thus making it clear that the time of a given reactor may vary greatly according as the mode of movement varies.

Shortest Reaction Values, and Sensory and Muscular Reactions: Professor L. WITMER.

A report of reaction experiments in which values as low as 50 sigmas appeared with a consistency too great to allow them to be eliminated as accidental. Also a criticism on the basis of given results of the theory of sensory and motor types of reaction.

The Simple Reaction as a Test of Mental Ability: Dr. C. N. WHIPPLE.

Such tests are wholly inadequate. This conclusion was supported by a critical examination of the work of earlier investigators where a different conclusion was reached.

The Psychological Term 'Observer': Professor C. E. SEASHORE.

In the absence of Professor Seashore the paper was read by Dr. J. W. Baird. It contained a discussion of the terms 'subject,' 'observer' and 'reactor,' insisting upon the desirability of a discriminating use of these terms. 'Observer' should be the general term for the person on whom an experiment is tried. 'Subject' should be used where this person is abnormal, and 'reactor' where some movement is required.

Eye Movements Studied by Photography, with Special Reference to the Mueller-Lyer, Poggendorff and Zoellner Figures: Professor C. H. JUDD.

A number of investigators at the Yale Laboratory are photographing the eyes during inspection of various illusions. The photographs are taken with an Edison kinetoscope camera. In connection with this work practice series with the various figures are being carried on, and photographs are taken to show the character of eye movements under natural conditions and after training. The closest possible relation exists between eye movements and the illusions in the figures studied.

An Apparatus for Investigating Torsion during Eye Movements, with some Results: Professor W. B. PILLSBURY.

A reading telescope was mounted so that its spider web could be made to coincide with some radial line of the iris. Torsion of the eye was thus measured as the eye moved from positions of primary and secondary fixation to points at the periphery. The measurements show no torsion during convergence. Other movements in which torsions appear seem to obey Donders' law rather than Listing's law.

Convergence and Accommodation in the Perception of Depth: Dr. J. W. BAIRD. Read by title.

Imitation of Tones, with and without Distraction: Professor C. H. JUDD.

Graphic records made on smoked paper directly from a phonograph diaphragm show the pitch of a tone sung by any subject. Such records were exhibited for tones repeated without distractions, and for other tones repeated in the presence of distractions. Distraction sometimes leads the subject to make an error in the direction opposite to the distracting tone.

Relative Legibility of the Small Letters: Dr. C. N. WHIPPLE.

Demonstration of apparatus together with some discussion of individual forms of letters.

Perimetry: Dr. J. W. BAIRD.

Hellpach's zone of complementary colors outside the zone of total color blindness at the periphery of the retina can be shown to be due to after images which are very much more marked at the periphery than in the center of the retina.

Influence of Closing Eyes on Attention Waves: Professor W. B. PILLSBURY. Read by title.

Fluctuations of Attention and Vasomotor Waves: C. E. GALLOWAY. Read by title.

Fluctuations of Attention: C. E. FERREE.

A series of experiments with visual stimuli of varying intensity and area. The results go to show that the fluctuations are not of central nervous origin, but are merely cases of retinal adaptation. Thus as the area grows large so that eye movements can not bring the light to an unadapted portion of the retina, fluctuation does not appear. Constant series of parallel variations go to show that fluctuation and retinal adaptation follow the same law.

A Study of Attention by the Method of Expression: H. C. STEVENS.

Plethysmograph and pneumograph curves were taken during various forms of visual, auditory and tactual attention. The pulse and respiration differ for the different types of attention, while the plethysmograph gives uniformly a negative curve for all forms of attention.

An Outline of an Experiment Investigating the Interrelations of Taste and Smell: MATILDE CASTRO (introduced by Professor J. R. ANGELL). Read by title.

Type vs. Instruction in Psychophysical Work: Professor E. B. TITCHENER. Read by title.

The 'Psychophysical Series' as a Training Experiment: Methods, Results and Computation: Professor E. B. TITCHENER. Read by title.

During the intervals between sessions the Cornell Laboratory was inspected under the guidance of Professors Titchener and Bentley. The last evening session was held in the Psychoeducational Laboratory. The equipment of this laboratory was examined under the guidance of Dr. Whipple, who also read a critical discussion of the A-Test, showing its inapplicability to school tests. Professor E. C. Sanford demonstrated a device for mixing gray and white disks, not by rotating the disks themselves, but by viewing them through a rapidly rotating prism. G. H. Sabine demonstrated a speed regulator for the von Frey Limen Gauge.

The papers were followed by full discussions which were very generally participated in by those in attendance. C. H. JUDD.

YALE UNIVERSITY.